WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for building a product data tracking history of the manufacture of a product of the type which has a processing means, said method utilizing a central computer device operably connected to a communications network, comprising the steps of:

installing a diagnostic tool on the product, said tool being of the type which is capable of providing specification data about the product;

assigning a unique product identity code to the product;

connecting the product to the communications network;

remotely operating said diagnostic tool over the communications network from the central computer device to provide said product specification data to the central computer device, said product specification data comprising at least said unique product identity code; and,

building the product tracking data history using said product specification data with the central computer device.

2. A method as defined in claim 1 wherein said diagnostic tool comprises at least computer executable instructions recorded on a computer accessible medium.

3. A method for building a product tracking data history as defined in claim 2 wherein said computer executable instructions comprise at least instructions for determining an inventory of installed components on the product, for storing and reporting said unique product identity code, and wherein said product specification data further comprises an inventory of components installed on the product.

4. A method for building a product tracking data history as defined in claim 1 wherein said step of building the product tracking data history using said product specification data further comprises assigning said unique product identity code to the product tracking data history.

5. A method for building a product tracking data history as defined in claim 1 wherein an operator computer device that at least partially controls the manufacture of the product is connected to the communications network, the method further comprising the steps of:

placing at least one set of product assembly specifications in a central data depository connected to the central computer device;

assigning a unique identity code to each of said set of product assembly specifications;

transmitting said product assembly specifications to the operator computer device for use in assembling the product; and,

wherein said product specification data further comprises said unique identity code corresponding to said product assembly specifications being transmitted to the operator computer device.

6. A method for building a product tracking data history as defined in claim 1 wherein the method further comprises the steps of:

providing at least one product performance test protocol;

placing said at least one product performance test protocol in a central data repository connected to said central computer device;

wherein said step of remotely operating said diagnostic tool over the communications network further comprises causing said diagnostic tool to execute said at least one product performance test protocol, and wherein said product specification data reported by said diagnostic tool further comprises product performance test results.

7. A method for building a product tracking data history as defined in claim 6 wherein said method further comprises the step of:

assigning a unique test identity code to each of said at least a product performance test protocol; and,

wherein said product specification data reported by said diagnostic tool further comprises said unique test identity code corresponding to said performance test protocol.

8. A method for building a product tracking data history as defined in claim 7 wherein each of said at least a product performance test protocol has a pass or fail outcome, and wherein the method further comprises the step of:

creating a product defect file in said central data repository when a fail result occurs upon execution of said at least a product performance test protocol.

9. A method for building a product data tracking history as defined in claim 8 wherein said product defect file comprises at least said test identity code for said product performance test protocol resulting in said fail result.

10. A method for building a product tracking data history as defined in claim 1 wherein the method is for manufacturing a product for a product owner by at least an external contractor, the at least an external contractor connected to the communications network, and wherein the central computer device connected to said network is under control of the product owner, wherein the method further comprises the step of:

connecting the product to the communications network while the product is at the external contractor; and,

wherein said step of remotely operating said diagnostic tool over the communications network comprises remotely operating said diagnostic tool while the product is at the at least an external contractor.

11. A method for building a product tracking data history as defined in claim 10 wherein the method further comprises the step of:

assigning each of the at least an external contractor a unique contractor code, and wherein said product specification data further comprises said unique contractor code.

12. A method for building a product tracking history as defined in claim 11 wherein the at least an external contractor comprises a plurality of external contractors.

13. A method for building a product tracking data history for a product manufactured for a product owner by at least an external contractor, a communications network connecting the product owner with each of the at least an external contractors, a central computer device controlled by the product owner connected to the communications network, the method comprising the steps of:

installing a diagnostic tool on the product, said diagnostic tool being of the type which is capable of reporting specification data about the product;

assigning a unique product identity code to the product;

connecting the product to the communications network when the product is at the at least an external contractor;

remotely operating said diagnostic tool over the communications network with the central computer device to report product specification data to a central data repository connected to the central computer device, said product specification data comprising at least said unique product identity code; and,

building the product tracking data history from said central data depository using said product specification data.

14. A method as defined in claim 13 wherein said diagnostic tool comprises at least computer executable instructions recorded on a computer accessible medium.

15. A method for building a product tracking data history as defined in claim 14 wherein said diagnostic tool recorded computer executable instructions comprise at least instructions for determining an inventory of installed components on the product, means for storing said unique product identity code, and wherein said product specification data further comprises an inventory of components installed on the product.

16. A method for building a product tracking data history as defined in claim 13 wherein said step of building the product tracking data history from said central data depository using said product specification data further comprises assigning said unique product identity code to the product tracking data history.

17. A method for building a product tracking data history as defined in claim 13, wherein the method further comprises the step of:

placing at least a set of product assembly specifications in said central data repository whereby the at least an external contractor may access said at least a set of product assembly specifications remotely over the communications network to build the product.

18. A method for building a product tracking data history as defined in claim 17 wherein the at least an external contractor has an operator computer device connected to the communications network, and wherein the method further comprises the steps of:

assigning a unique product assembly specification code to each of said at least a set of product assembly specifications;

transmitting said at least a set of product assembly specifications over the communications network to the operator computer device; and

wherein said product specification data remotely reported over the communications network from said diagnostic tool further comprises said

unique product assembly specification code corresponding to said at least a set of product assembly specifications transmitted to the operator computer device.

19. A method for building a product tracking data history as defined in claim 13 wherein the method further comprises the steps of:

providing at least a product performance test protocol for testing the performance of the product; and,

placing said at least a product performance test protocol in said central data repository whereby said at least a product performance test protocol may be transmitted over the communications network to the at least an external contractor.

20. A method for building a product tracking data history as defined in claim 19 wherein said step of remotely operating said diagnostic tool over the communications network further comprises causing said diagnostic tool to execute said product performance test protocol, and wherein said product specification data reported by said diagnostic tool further comprises results from execution of said product performance test protocol.

21. A method for building a product tracking data history as defined in claim 20 wherein the method further comprises the step of assigning a unique test identity code to each of said at least a product performance protocol, and wherein said product specification data reported by said diagnostic tool further comprises said unique test identity code corresponding to said performance test protocol.

22. A method for building a product tracking data history as defined in claim 21 wherein each of said at least a product performance test protocol has a pass or fail outcome, and wherein the method further comprises the step of creating a product defect history file in said central data repository upon occurrence of said fail result.

23. A method for building a product tracking history as defined in claim 22 wherein said product defect history comprises at least said product performance test identity code corresponding to said product performance test resulting in said fail outcome.

24. A method for building a product tracking history as defined in claim 13 wherein the at least a contractor comprises a plurality of contractors; each of the plurality of contractors connected to the communications network whereby each of the external contractors may interface with said central data repository, and wherein the method further comprises the step of:

assigning each of the plurality of external contractors a unique contractor code;

wherein said step of remotely operating said diagnostic tool over the communications network further comprises connecting the product to the communications network when the product is at each of the plurality of contractors;

prompting said diagnostic tool to provide said unique contractor code corresponding to the contractor where the product is; and,

wherein said product specification data reported over the communications network to said central data repository further said unique contractor code.

25. A method for building a product tracking data history for a product being manufactured for a product owner by at least an external contractor, the product owner and at least an external contractor connected to a communications network, the product owner controlling a central computer device connected to the communications network, each of the at least an external contractors having an operator computer device connected to the communications network for use in at least a portion of the product manufacture, the method comprising the steps of:

installing a diagnostic tool on the product; said diagnostic tool being of the type which is capable of providing specification data about the product; said diagnostic tool comprising at least computer executable instructions;

assigning a unique product identity code to the product, said unique product identity code accessible by said diagnostic tool;

assigning a unique contractor code to each of the at least an external contractor;

providing at least a set of product assembly specifications;

assigning each of said at least a set of product assembly specifications a unique identity code;

placing said at least a set of product assembly specifications on the central computer device;

providing at least a product performance test protocol; assigning each of said at least a product performance test protocol a unique test identity code, each of said at least a product performance test protocol having a pass or fail outcome;

placing said at least a product performance test protocol on the central computer device;

connecting the product to the communications network when the product is at the at least an external contractor;

transmitting said at least a set of product assembly specifications over the communications network to the operator computer device at the external contractor when the product is connected to said communications device;

remotely operating said diagnostic tool over the communications network to report product specification data to the central computer device, said product specification data comprising at least said unique product identity code, an inventory of components installed on the product, said unique product assembly code corresponding to said at least a set of product assembly specifications transmitted over the communications network, said unique

contractor identity code corresponding to the external contractor said set of product assembly specifications are transmitted;

remotely operating said diagnostic tool to execute said at least a performance test protocol to produce performance test results, remotely prompting said diagnostic tool to report said performance test results over the communications network to the central computer device;

building the product data history with the central computer device;

assigning said unique product identity code to the product data history, the product data history comprising at least, said inventory of components installed on the product, said unique contractor code corresponding to the contractor the product is, said product assembly specifications identity code corresponding to said at least a set of product assembly specifications being transmitted over the communications network to the operator computer device, said performance test identity code for each of said at least a performance test protocol executed by said diagnostic tool with corresponding of said performance test results; and,

creating a product defect tracking history with the central computer device upon a fail result after execution of any of said at least a product performance test protocols, said product defect history comprising at least said test identity code for said at least a product performance test protocol resulting in said fail result.

26. A method for creating a product tracking data history file as defined in claim 25 wherein the at least an external contractor comprises a plurality of external contractors.

27. A computer program product for causing a computer to create a product tracking data history file for a product, the product comprising processor means and having a unique product identity code, the product having a diagnostic tool installed therein, the diagnostic tool of the type capable of

reporting product specification data, the computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code embodied in the medium, the computer usable medium on a central computer that is connected to a communications network, the computer program product when executed causing the central computer to:

remotely operate said diagnostic tool over the communications network when the product is connected to the communications network to report product specification data to a central data repository connected to the central computer device, said product specification data comprising at least said unique product identity code; and,

build the product tracking data history from said central data depository using said product specification data.

28. A computer program product as defined in claim 27, wherein at least one set of product assembly specifications are stored in said central data depository connected to the central computer device, the product assembly specifications having a unique identity code, and wherein the computer program product when executed causes the central computer to:

transmit said set of product assembly specifications to an operator computer device connected to the communications network, the operator computer device for use in at least a portion of the manufacture of the product; and,

wherein said product specification data reported by said diagnostic tool further comprises said unique identity code corresponding to said product assembly specifications being transmitted to the operator computer device.

29. A computer program product as defined in claim 27, wherein at least one product performance test protocol is stored in said central data depository connected to the central computer device, each of said at least a

performance test protocols having a unique test identity code, and wherein the computer program product when executed causes the central computer to:

remotely operate said diagnostic tool over the communications network to execute said at least a product performance test protocol; and ,

wherein said product specification data reported by said diagnostic tool further comprises product performance test results and said unique test identity code corresponding to said at least a product performance test protocol being executed.

30. A computer program product for causing a computer to create a product tracking data history file for a product, the product comprising processor means and having a unique product identity code, the product having a diagnostic tool installed thereon, the diagnostic tool of the type capable of reporting product specification data, the product being manufactured for a product owner by an external contractor, a unique contractor code assigned to the external contractor, the computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code embodied in the medium, the computer usable medium on a central computer that is connected to a communications network, the product connected to the communications network at the external manufacturer, the computer program product when executed causing the central computer to:

transmit a set of product assembly specifications stored on the central computer over the communications network to an operator computer device at the external contractor, the operator computer device for use in at least a portion of the product manufacture, the set of product assembly specifications having a specification identity code;

remotely operate the diagnostic tool over the communications network to execute a product performance test protocol stored on the central computer, said product performance test protocol having a test identity code;

remotely operate the diagnostic tool over the communications network to report product specification data to the central computer device;

said product specification data comprising at least the unique product identity code, the unique contractor code, an inventory of components installed on the product, said unique product specification code corresponding to said set of product assembly specifications transmitted over the communications network, performance test results resulting from executing said product performance test protocol, said test identity code corresponding to said product performance test protocol executed;

build the product data history;

assign the unique product identity code to the product data history, the product data history comprising said inventory of components installed on the product, the unique contractor code corresponding to the external contractor the product, said product assembly specifications identity code corresponding to said set of product assembly specifications being transmitted over the communications network to said operator computer device, said test identity code for said performance test protocol executed by said diagnostic tool with corresponding of said performance test results; and,

create a product defect tracking history with the central computer device upon a fail result for any of said at least a product performance test protocols, said product defect history comprising at least the unique product identity code and said test identity code for said at least a product performance test protocol resulting in said fail result.